

security by false representations, promulgated, too, by that press which should ever be ready to warn, to guide, and to shield. Venal, indeed, must be that system which holds out encouragement to impostors and rogues.

Sir, your obedient servant,
Halifax, March, 1847. FRED. SMITH GARLICK, M.R.C.S.

ON THE TERM "CEREBRO-SPINAL."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read in Mr. Wharton Jones's critical letter to the President and Council of the Royal Society the expression, "*cerebro-spinal system*." Have I misunderstood your late articles on the subject when I supposed them to imply that this expression is incorrect? Is there such a system? Is not this supposed cerebro-spinal system in reality two—the *cerebral* and the *spinal*?

It has often struck me that *two* words, properly employed, would give the least thinking person a good idea of the divisions of the nervous system. The cerebral relates to all that is *without* us; the spinal, to all that proceeds *from without* to *within*, and *from within* to *without*; the ganglionic, to what passes *within* us.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
March, 1847.

SPECTATOR.

THE PHYSIOLOGICAL COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the authors of the Report of the Physiological Committee of the Royal Society, which is impugned in a document furnished by Mr. Wharton Jones in the last number of *THE LANCET*, we beg leave to say, that while we altogether deny the justice of the imputations conveyed in that document, whether they regard our good faith or our scientific accuracy; and whilst our opinion as to the excellence and originality of Mr. Beck's researches, remains unchanged, we are, nevertheless, disposed to submit to any imputations from the same quarter, rather than take any share in prolonging an agitation set on foot by disappointed expectants, on the character of which an opinion has been already pronounced in the Society itself, by a very significant majority.—We remain, your obedient servants,

London, March, 1847. W. SHARPEY,
R. B. TODD.

HOLLOWAY'S "LIFE" PILLS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The whole profession is under great obligation to you for your exposure of quackery, and especially of the wickedness and knavery of the advertisements and paragraphs so liberally scattered through the columns of the journals of this country. The following case appears to me to support your position:—

On Tuesday last, my partner was summoned to visit an old man, aged seventy-seven years, said to be dying. On his arrival, he found that, lured by the specious promises of a "speedy cure" for "the gravel," under which he supposed himself labouring, held out in the advertisements, the old man had purchased a box of "Holloway's life pills," and had taken them, according to the direction, in increasing doses, till at length a severe diarrhoea had set in, under which he sunk, three or four hours after my partner had seen him. We have made a return of his death to the registrar-general, and have fully stated our opinion of the cause of death.

There is, perhaps, no part of the kingdom in which quackery, in all its forms, is so rampant as in the manufacturing districts of West Yorkshire. The proprietors of "Sartin cures for rheumatism," "Worm powders," and "Paste for toothach," take their stand in rows in our market-place; bone-setters and professed curers of "certain diseases" fill our second and third class public-houses; while, last but not least, that worse than "do-nothing absurdity," homœopathy, has found a professor in—I regret to say it—a regularly educated surgeon, who, having retired from his profession, has succeeded a well-known political enthusiast in the stewardship of the Fixly estates, in this neighbourhood, and is blowing his "bubbles"—a better term, I think, than globules—in every direction through the district.

Do you not think it possible, Mr. Editor, that the comfortable position of the stewardship of Fixly may be tainted with some infectious miasma, which is certain to produce the disease of quackery in some form, political or otherwise?—I am, your very obedient servant,

Halifax, Feb. 1847.

ANTI-QUACK.

REGULATIONS OF THE NAVY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My object in troubling you with these lines is to direct your attention to the injustice sustained by the medical profession in the Royal Navy, in being obliged to pass through the gun-room.

Having completed their professional education, and arrived at adult age, they are placed on an equality with young officers who are learning seamanship, or clerk's duties, who have been afloat from their boyhood, and are unacquainted with the necessity of retirement for the purpose of study. Being without a cabin, they are obliged to spend their time with these young gentlemen, in whose society they too frequently neglect scientific pursuits, and the prosecution of their professional studies.

The assistant-surgeon is the only officer entering the service at an adult age who is placed in the gun-room; for the chaplain, naval instructor, and second lieutenant of marines, go into the ward-room at once, and have a cabin; and efforts are now being made to put the first engineer into the same mess, and give him the rank of a commissioned officer.

Surely it is time that young medical men should receive their due. They are an educated and a gentlemanly class, and of all the officers in the service, the most capable of advancing our knowledge of natural history; but to do this effectually, they require encouragement; for in their present position, retirement and study are almost impossible.

If placed in the ward-room, and granted a cabin, the assistant-surgeon in the navy would only be on an equal footing with his brother officer in the army.

No inconvenience could follow this arrangement, unless a respectable uniform and increased pay might succeed to it, and be so considered; whilst the service would be benefited by the entry of gentlemen of property, as well as of talent, as is the case in the army.

There are many of high attainments now in the navy list; but the number would be increased by the alteration, and the country repaid by the prevention, perhaps cure, of the diseases of our stations, as the pathology of these fevers, so necessary to a rational mode of treatment, would be studied with that ardour characteristic of scientific men.

I beg leave, Sir, to request that, being a member of the medical profession yourself, and the editor of a journal devoted to the support and improvement of that profession, both in itself and its external relations, you will advocate the rights of the assistant-surgeons of the Royal Navy, asserting their claims to be made ward-room officers, with a cabin, and a respectable uniform.

Changing the title to second surgeon might contribute to overcome that jealousy which would exclude an assistant-surgeon from the upper mess.

In concluding, I venture to predict as great an improvement among the medical officers of the service, as first and second surgeons, as that which has already taken place since the days of the old surgeons and their mates.

I enclose my name and address in confidence, and beg to subscribe myself your humble servant,

March, 1847.

AN ASSISTANT-SURGEON IN THE
ROYAL NAVY.

DISPUTED PERIOD OF GESTATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I should be much obliged if yourself, or some of your numerous correspondents, could throw some light upon this case, which involves the welfare, almost existence, of a young and at present deserted child:—

Two men, A and B, had intercourse, unknown to each other, with a young woman of delicate health; and after many years, she was delivered of a female child, nine calendar months and three days after sexual intercourse with A, and nine calendar months less five days after similar intercourse with B; or at the end of 279 days after intercourse with A, and at the end of 271 days after intercourse with B—that is, a period of eight days elapsed between the periods of intercourse between the two men; and the woman had no female ailment in the meantime, and it is not believed she knew any other man. She went her full time, had a good labour, and produced a fine healthy girl; had a plentiful supply of milk, and had better health during her pregnancy and suckling than at any other time. She, however, suckled her child too long, got excessively low and nervous, it is believed worried herself

as to which of the two men was the father of her child, and has since died.

During her last illness, she said that she always thought that the child must be the child of A, as she had once before miscarried by him, and had great affection for him, and her feelings made her think it was his; but that she did not know, as the time was beyond nine calendar months, (she entertaining the opinion that a woman could not go beyond nine calendar months.)

These circumstances have now become known to both A and B, and both refuse to maintain the child. A contends, that as the woman was not delivered until nine months and three days after connexion with him, it is physically impossible the child can be his. B contends that that has nothing to do with it; that 280 days, and not nine months at all, is the period of gestation; and that the child, being born at 279 days after connexion with A, and only at 271 days after connexion with B, the probabilities were, that the child was the child of A, particularly coupled with the fact, that the woman had once before miscarried by A, and that she had stated, during her last illness, that her feelings told her it was the child of A.

There is no perceptible likeness of either of the men in the child, but a marked likeness of the mother.

Either of the men would maintain the child if he could be satisfied he was the father of it; and in the hope that you or your correspondents will kindly give such information upon the subject that may satisfy one of them, I remain, Sir, your constant reader,

GILBERT SMITH.

London, Feb. 1847.

Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of Gentlemen who passed their Examination, and received Certificates to Practise, on Thursday, March 4th, 1847:—Peter Brady; Thomas Orton, Rothwell; William Cumming; Edmund John Burman, Banstead, Surrey; James Graham, Liverpool.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.—Dr. R. F. Lindoe has been elected physician to the Eastern Dispensary, Bath, in the room of Dr. Tarleton, resigned.

DEPUTATION TO SIR GEORGE GREY.—We are authorized to state, that a deputation from the Council of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, has had an interview with the Right Hon. Sir George Grey, and that from the result of this interview, strong hopes are entertained that a settlement of the questions connected with medical reform, satisfactory to all branches of the profession, may be obtained. These hopes are, however, dependent upon some approach to unanimity, in the concession of minor points, being manifested by the different sections of the profession.—*Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal.*

The Medical Society of London held its seventy-fourth anniversary at the Albion Tavern, Aldersgate-street, on the 8th inst.—the President, W. C. Dendy, Esq., in the Chair. The ballot was declared to be as follows:—*President:* W. C. Dendy, Esq.—*Vice-Presidents:* Theophilus Thompson, M.D.; John Bishop, Esq.; H. Clutterbuck, M.D.; John Hilton, F.R.S.—*Treasurer:* Nathaniel Clifton, Esq.—*Librarian:* W. H. Willshire, M.D.—*Honorary Secretaries:* James F. Clarke, Esq.; W. Smiles, M.D.—*Secretary for Foreign Correspondence:* Thos. Davidson, M.D.—*Councillors:* W. Eales, Esq.; F. Hutchinson, Esq.; E. H. Linnecar, Esq.; James Middleton, Esq.; George Pilcher, Esq.; G. Owen Rees, M.D., F.R.S.; C. J. Roberts, M.D.; Silas Stedman, Esq.; J. C. Taunton, Esq.; Forbes Winslow, M.D.; A. B. Garrod, M.D.; Frederick Bird, M.D.; Henry Oldham, M.D.; Richard Rowland, M.D.; Golding Bird, M.D., F.R.S.; Edward Headland, Esq.; W. D. Chowne, M.D.; W. A. Harrison, Esq.; W. Kingdon, Esq.; Henry Hancock, Esq. Fellow to deliver the Oration, 1848, Francis Hird, Esq. Dr. Golding Bird then delivered the Oration, which will be found in another page. The Forthergillian Gold Medal was then awarded to Silas Stedman, Esq., for an Essay on Insanity. The First Silver Medal to W. A. Harrison, Esq., of Keppel-street, on his retirement from the office of Secretary, for general services rendered to the Society; and the Second Silver Medal to D. M. Hughes, of Guy's Hospital, for a paper read before the Society, on Chest Disease, and published in *THE LANCET*. The award of the Medals was accompanied by a very appropriate speech to each of the recipients, by the President. The fellows and their friends afterwards partook of a sumptuous dinner, and good fellowship and conviviality were kept up to a late hour. The dinner party consisted of a greater number than usual.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES OF INSANITY.—Amongst the improvements recently made at Bethlem Hospital, one was a new form of certificate respecting the insanity of patients applying for admission, in which the exact qualification of the practitioner signing must now be stated before it is received, and then only if the party belongs to one of the medical corporations of England, or is a graduate of a British university, and entitled to practise. It is reported that the new system works well, and so far from difficulties being encountered, the profession have uniformly aided the authorities by adopting the plan recommended; and as Bethlem Hospital is not under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners in Lunacy, and only one certificate of insanity is required at this institution, instead of two, as in ordinary cases, it became more necessary to obtain such a document from a legally-qualified practitioner, so that no lunatic might be improperly confined. In illustration of the advantages of this change, and the way in which it operates, we may mention, that very recently a certificate attesting the insanity of a person sent for admission, which bore the signature of a graduate of a foreign university, was refused, and the patient not admitted, until another certificate, signed by a member of an English medical corporation, was presented and approved. This proceeding is worthy of imitation; and if all public bodies, as well as private individuals, would act upon the same principle, and employ none but properly qualified medical men, there would be fewer coroner's inquests reported in the newspapers; whilst quackery would be a less profitable trade than it has hitherto proved throughout the British empire.

OBITUARY.—February 26th, aged fifty-eight, of angina pectoris, George G. Bompas, Esq., M.D., of Fishponds, Bristol, long a member of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, and President-Elect of the Bath and Bristol Branch. Dr. Bompas was possessed of considerable scientific attainments, especially in his own branch of the profession—the relief of mental disease. He was of mild and amiable deportment, a model of the Christian gentleman, and all his actions were influenced by a feeling of deep responsibility. These characteristics were especially manifested in the performance of his professional duties, and although not an implicit follower of what is called the non-restraint system, his judicious and gentle management of the patients entrusted to his care effected the successful restoration of the mental powers in a very remarkable degree.

CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. King's paper shall appear in an early number; a press of contributions has prevented its insertion earlier.

S. C. should address a letter of inquiry to the secretary of the Hanwell Asylum.

A Constant Reader.—B should have been the special witness to the facts of the post-mortem examination, as the ordinary medical attendant; the examination of C, D, must depend on the judgment of the coroner.

A General Practitioner.—The queries shall be answered in our next.

A Constant Reader from the first may depend that we shall not grow weary of exposing quackery: we hope his own shoulder is at the wheel. We are obliged to him for his awakening note.

Medicus.—We believe not.

Dr. Orpen.—The circular enclosed certainly substantiates entirely the assertions of Dr. Orpen. It appears that the governors of the Birkenhead Hospital and Dispensary have provided that no physician shall hold any office in their institution. Such an interference with ordinary professional usages is highly impertinent and improper. Query: Would these governors, if ill, refuse, in a medical case, the consultation of a physician? Let them do for the poor as, we doubt not, they would be quite ready to do for themselves.

A Very Old Subscriber.—The surgeon could not recover in an action at law, in such a case, unless he had an agreement with the party properly drawn in writing.

A. B. C.—In reply to question No. 1, we should say that all are about of equal value in England. No. 2. They are all recognised by the College of Physicians, London. No. 3. The examinations only occupy one day. No. 4. The examinations for the greater part are *vidu voce*.

I. O. U.—The fee might certainly be taken with propriety.

Dr. Radford's valuable paper on uterine hæmorrhage shall appear in our next.

Communications have been received from—Mr. Roger S. Munn, (Colchester); Mr. T. Wilkinson King; Mr. Semple; Dr. Ormerod; S. C.; A Constant Reader; Mr. E. B. Neil; A General Practitioner; M. H. H.; Spectator; Dr. Allnatt; Medicus; A Constant Reader from the first; Mr. Prior; Mr. J. A. Dorr; Mr. Gossett; Dr. R. G. Mayne; An Anxious Inquirer; Mr. Edward Daniel, (Newport Pagnell); Somebody; Dr. T. W. J. Merriman; Cephas; Mr. Reginald Orton; Dr. Orpen, (Birkenhead); Mr. John Wood; Mr. Burnett; Mr. McEvoy; Dr. Burrows; Dr. Wickstead; Mr. T. Willan; Mr. Adny; Messrs. Deighton and Co., Worcester, (with the engravings); Mr. Anderson, (Bellinghay); Calligium; Dr. Radford, (Manchester).